

What is claimed is:

1. A color thermal printer for recording full color image by recording one color image at each of printing units during transportation of a long recording sheet by a couple of transporting rollers, a plurality of said printing units being disposed along the transporting path, each of said printing units including a platen roller for supporting said long recording sheet, and a thermal head for executing thermal recording of each color image by pressing said recording sheet which is supported by said platen roller, said color thermal printer comprising:

a rotating speed detector disposed on said platen roller for detecting rotating speed of said platen roller; and
a controller for recording image by driving said thermal head of each printing unit when transporting quantity of said recording sheet transported by said transporting roller couple reaches target value corresponding to the recording start position, the controller calculating the transporting correction quantity of said recording sheet from the rotating speed fluctuation amount of said platen roller, to correct said target value so as to correspond to the recording start position of a directly downstream printing unit.

2. A color thermal printer as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a memory for storing data table in which said rotating speed fluctuation amount is associated with said transporting correction quantity.

3. A color thermal printer as claimed in claim 2, wherein
said controller obtains said correction value by detecting said
rotating speed fluctuation amount at each fixed period of time,
calculates a cumulative correction quantity by accumulating the
5 correction quantity during recording of said image, to correct
said target value according to said cumulative correction
quantity so as to correspond to the recording start position
of said directly downstream printing unit.

10 4. A color thermal printer as claimed in claim 2, wherein
said rotating speed detector is a pulse encoder which outputs
pulse signal according to the rotating amount of said platen
roller.

15 5. A color thermal printer as claimed in claim 4, wherein
said pulse encoder includes a disk-shaped slit plate formed with
a plurality of slits which extends in a radial direction and
a photoelectric sensor of a transmission type for detecting
passage of said slits to output said pulse signal.

20 6. A color thermal printer as claimed in claim 2, wherein
first, second and third printing units are disposed from
upstream of said transporting path in sequence on one another
for respectively recording yellow, magenta and cyan images, and
25 said rotating speed detector is provided on said platen roller
of said first and second printing units.

7. A color thermal printing method of recording full color

image by recording one color image at each of printing units during transportation of a long recording sheet by a couple of transporting rollers, a plurality of said printing units being disposed along the transporting path, each of said printing units including a platen roller for supporting said long recording sheet, and a thermal head for executing thermal recording of each color image by pressing said recording sheet which is supported by said platen roller, said color thermal printing method comprising the steps of:

10 determining whether transporting quantity of said recording sheet by said transporting roller couple reaches target value corresponding to the recording start position;

when said transporting quantity reaches said target value, recording image by driving said thermal head of each printing unit;

detecting rotating speed of said platen roller;

calculating the transporting correction quantity of the said recording sheet from rotating speed fluctuation amount of said platen roller; and

20 correcting said target value so as to correspond to a recording start position of a directly downstream printing unit.

8. A color thermal printing method as claimed in claim 25 7, wherein in said correction quantity calculating step, a data table is used, and has data of said rotating speed fluctuation amount and said transporting correction quantity associated therewith.

9. A color thermal printing method as claimed in claim
8, further comprising the steps of:

obtaining said correction quantity by detecting said
5 rotating speed fluctuation amount at a fixed period of time;

calculating a cumulative correction quantity by
accumulating said correction quantity during recording of said
image; and

correcting said target value according to said cumulative
10 correction quantity, so as to correspond to the recording start
position of said directly downstream printing unit.

10. A color thermal printing method as claimed in claim
8, wherein in said speed detecting step, a rotating amount of
15 said platen roller is detected in a stepwise manner.

11. A color thermal printing method as claimed in claim
10, wherein in said speed detecting step, a pulse encoder is
used for detecting said rotating amount photoelectrically.

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12. A color thermal printing method as claimed in claim
8, wherein first, second and third printing units are disposed
from upstream of said transporting path in sequence on one
another for respectively recording yellow, magenta and cyan
25 images;

in said speed detecting step, said rotating speed in said
first and second printing units is detected.